

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A method of monitoring a container associated with an item, comprising:
receiving an indication that the container has been opened; and
arranging for ownership of the item to be transferred based on the indication.
2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein ownership is transferred to at least one of: (i) a person who opened the container, or (ii) a party associated with the container.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said arranging comprises:
arranging for a party to provide payment in exchange for the item based on the indication.
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the payment is associated with at least one of: (i) a purchase, (ii) a license, (iii) a loan, or (iv) a rental.
5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving comprises:
receiving a signal generated by a remote transmitting device.
6. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein the transmitting device does not transmit a signal when the container is subsequently re-opened.
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the transmitting device is associated with at least one of: (i) a radio transmitter, (ii) a photosensitive device, (iii) a pressure sensitive device, (iv) a conductive element attached to an enclosure, (v) a seal having a

conductive element, (vi) a seal having a non-conductive element, or (vii) a flexible printed circuit board device.

8. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said receiving comprises receiving the signal at a controller via a communication device.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the indication includes at least one of: (i) a party identifier, (ii) an item identifier, (iii) an item category, (iv) a container identifier, (v) a date, (vi) a time, or (vii) location information.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the indication is received via at least one of: (i) a wireless network, (ii) an Internet protocol network, (iii) a Bluetooth network, or (iv) a cellular network.

11. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing the container to a party without receiving payment in exchange for the item.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:
arranging for the party to provide security deposit information.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the security deposit information comprises at least one of: (i) a credit card number, (ii) a debit card number, (iii) a bank account number, (iv) digital payment protocol information, or (v) an address.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the item comprises at least one of: (i) a consumer item, (ii) a consumable item, (iii) paper, (iv) toner, (v) energy, (vi) food, (vii) a medical item, (viii) medicine, (ix) disposable contact lenses, (x) a software program, (xi)

an entertainment item, (xii) text information, (xiii) audio information, (xiv) image information, (xv) an information storage item, (xvi) a regulated item, or (xvii) a financial item.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the container comprises at least one of: (i) a package, (ii) a wrapper, (iii) a box, (iv) a bag, (v) a bottle, (vi) a can, (vii) an envelope, (viii) a label, (ix) a tag, or (x) a tie.

16-52. (cancelled).

53. (new) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining item quality information based on the indication.

54. (new) The method of claim 53, wherein said determining is based on a date the indication was received.

55. (new) The method of claim 54, wherein said determining is further based on a date associate with at least one of: (i) creation of the item, (ii) packaging of the item, (iii) sale of the item, or (iv) delivery of the item.

56. (new) The method of claim 53, further comprising:
transmitting an indication of the item quality information.

57. (new) The method of claim 56, wherein the indication of the item quality information is transmitted to at least one of: (i) a party associated with the container, (ii) an owner of the container, (iii) a person who opened the container, or (iv) a destination associated with the container.

58. (new) The method of claim 56, wherein the indication is transmitted at least one of: (i) periodically, (ii) a single time, or (iii) when the item quality information is less than a pre-determined minimum item quality.

59. (new) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining item warranty information based on the indication.

60. (new) The method of claim 59, wherein the item warranty information comprises an effective date based on the date the container was opened by a consumer.

61. (new) The method of claim 59, wherein the warranty information is associated with a return policy.

62. (new) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording the indication as an acceptance of an agreement associated with the item.

63. (new) The method of claim 62, wherein the item is associated with a software program and the agreement comprises a license to use the software program.

64. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein an alert is transmitted to at least one of: (i) a person who opened the container, (ii) a party associated with the item, or (iii) a third party.

65. (new) A computer implemented method, comprising:
providing a disposable package to a consumer without receiving payment in exchange for a consumable item contained within the disposable package;
receiving an indication that the disposable package has been opened;

arranging for ownership of the consumable item to be transferred based on the indication;
and

arranging for the consumer to provide payment in exchange for the consumable item
based on the indication.

66. (new) An apparatus, comprising:

a processor; and

a storage device in communication with said processor and storing instructions adapted to
be executed by said processor to:

receive an indication that a container has been opened, and

arrange for ownership of an item associated with the container to be transferred
based on the indication.

67. (new) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein said storage device further stores a
container status database.

68. (new) The apparatus of claim 66, further comprising:

a communication device coupled to said processor and adapted to communicate with at
least one of: (i) the container, (ii) a local device, (iii) a controller, or (iv) a payment device.

69. (new) The apparatus of claim 66, further comprising:

an enclosure of the container; and

a transmitting device adapted to transmit the indication when the enclosure of the
container is opened, wherein the transmitting device does not transmit the indication when the
enclosure is subsequently re-opened.

70. (new) The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the enclosure comprises at least one of: (i) a tie, (ii) a wrapper, (iii) a box, (iv) a bag, (v) a bottle, (vi) a can, (vii) an envelope, (viii) a label, or (ix) a tag.

71. (new) The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the transmitting device is associated with at least one of: (i) radio transmitter, (ii) a photosensitive device, (iii) a pressure sensitive device, (iv) a conductive element attached to the enclosure, (v) a seal having a conductive element, (vi) a seal having a non-conductive element, (vii) a disposable transmitter, or (viii) a flexible printed circuit board device.

72. (new) The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the transmitting device does not transmit the signal if a pre-determined number of other containers are present.

73. (new) A medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to perform a method of monitoring a container associated with an item, said method comprising:

receiving an indication that the container has been opened; and
arranging for ownership of the item to be transferred based on the indication.

74. (new) A method of monitoring a remote container associated with an item, comprising:

receiving an indication that the container has been opened;
arranging for ownership of the item to be transferred based on the indication; and
arranging for another item to be provided based on the indication.

75. (new) The method of claim 74, wherein said arranging comprises arranging for another item to be provided to at least one of: (i) a party associated with the container, (ii) an

owner of the container, (iii) a person who opened the container, or (iv) a destination associated with the container.

76. (new) The method of claim 75, wherein the party has access to a plurality of containers and said arranging is performed after a pre-determined plurality of indications are received from the plurality of containers.

77. (new) The method of claim 74, further comprising:
determining a rate of usage based on the indication.

78. (new) The method of claim 77, wherein the rate of usage is associated with at least one of: (i) a party associated with the container, (ii) an owner of the container, (iii) a person who opened the container, or (iv) a destination associated with the container.

79. (new) The method of claim 77, further comprising:
reporting the rate of usage to a party associated with the container.

80. (new) The method of claim 79, wherein said reporting is performed at least one of: (i) periodically, (ii) a single time, (iii) when the rate of usage is less than a minimum pre-determined threshold amount, or (iv) when the rate of usage is more than a pre-determined maximum threshold amount.

81. (new) The method of claim 74, wherein the indication comprises at least one of: (i) an indication of a number of containers that have been opened, or (ii) an indication of a number of containers remaining.

82. (new) A method, comprising:

arranging for an item owned by a first party to be within a container;

providing the container and the item to a second party without receiving payment for the item from the second party, wherein the first party remains the owner of the item while the second party has possession of the container and the item;

receiving a signal indicating that the container has been opened;

verifying that the container was opened in accordance with an item requirement, wherein the item requirement includes a requirement that no more than a selected number of containers, each containing an associated item, have been opened in a selected time period;

transferring ownership of the item to the second party in response to the signal; and

arranging for the second party to provide payment for the item in response to the signal.

83. (new) The method of claim 80, further comprising:

transmitting an alert if the container was not opened in accordance with the item requirement.

84. (new) The method of claim 82, wherein the item is associated with a medical treatment program.